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30 November 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR: Legal Staff

SUBJECT: Legal Opinions

1. As the professional and administrative staffs of the Agency progress in experience and training, they grow more proficient in the handling of problems confronting them and as a result have less and less need to call on this Office for advice. While this tends to lessen the Office workload in a sense of the number of problems considered, it also means that we have referred to us for the most part those problems which, because of their novelty, difficulty, or complexity, cannot be resolved by the other offices. This puts the onus on us to do the most thorough review of each case that we are capable of. The lessening number of problems should give us the time needed for such a thorough review.

2. It has been my concept that to do its work thoroughly, this Office should in each case go back to the basic documents and information, check the authorizations, and consider not only the question submitted to us but such other questions or solutions as may appear from the fullest information available. I realize this is not possible in all cases, but unless there are truly precluding factors, we should not depend on summaries or investigations and reports of other offices where the basic record is physically available. It should be the aim in each case to provide a product so complete that the users of our opinions can rest assured that all factors have been considered and there is no need to look behind our final document.

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LAWRENCE R. HOUSTON  
General Counsel

cc: DD/S

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